2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BOATH.

External appearance of the Boath—Night visit—Inside of the Boath—Where are the Relics?—The Boath an exceptional curiosity—Speculations regarding it; a Bethel? connected with the Bothan?

CHAP. XIX.

ON a previous visit to the village close to which this temple—one out of only three or four in the whole tribe—is situated,[1] I had been able to reconnoitre it at my leisure whilst talking to the naked vorshâl seated on the surrounding-wall.

He told us with Toda solemnity and such an air, that there were very sacred relics in it, handed down from past generations. Here a turn in the wrist of his upraised arm implied the pre-historic antiquity I was hunting for! How did he guess my secret? But he was lamentably hazy when I strove to turn his observations to practical account. Nor could I get from him a clear description, even of his daily occupations. To sit naked on the wall and look like a scarecrow was the feat he seemed to accomplish best.

'I want to go in,' I said, advancing towards the temple.

'No,' he replied, backing towards the door of the sacred edifice, and shaking the palms of both hands and outspread fingers in alarmed delirium.

'What will happen if I go in?'

'The Gods will tear you to pieces.'

He would not agree to the proposal, though backed by a little offering, so after taking a sketch I retired.

[1] At the top of the Sigûr Ghat.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

No 21

opp. p. 164

346
351

AUTOTYPE, LONDON.

CONICAL TEMPLE.

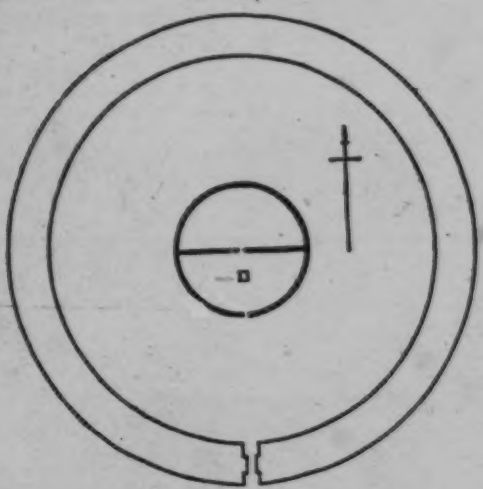
BOATH.

CHAP. XIX.

The appearance of the building is as follows; a conical thatched roof on a circular wall of very stout planking. The wall about four cubits high. The whole edifice some fourteen or fifteen cubits tall and six cubits in diameter. At a distance of approximately six cubits, the temple is surrounded by a massive wall of uncut stone, put together without cement, two cubits broad and three in height.

I have represented in the sketch the wall as partially

No. 20.



CONICAL TEMPLE—BOATH.

thrown down, with a view to displaying the entire building, but in reality the circuit of the wall is complete.

The apex of the cone is crowned with a large stone, placed there apparently with the object—however inadequate the conception—of steadying the roof, or perhaps excluding rain from that weak point.

Some days subsequent to this visit, selecting a dark night for the purpose, and accompanied by a friend—who, I had better at once state, was not the reverend companion who has

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

been my steady associate in all innocent if somewhat inquisitorial visits—I walked over the hills to this village on burglarious intent. What should I do, I thought as I went along, if I really met a valuable relic, say some 2,000 years old, with an inscription on it? Who is it is said to have said that every man has his price? I had mine. Were I only to find a signet ring, I was ripe to commit theft in addition to the minor crime of breaking into a savage man's temple. CHAP. XIX.

In this frame of mind we arrived at the spot. How nobly the little billy-cock house stood out in relief against the murky sky! The buffalos in the pen close by, were breathing hard and snorting as they caught our smell. Fastidious in them, considering that we were certainly clean, as compared with their slumbering masters and mistresses. Indeed it must have been the unusual scent that disturbed them.

All the world asleep and hushed but we two and a few fastidious cattle. Though all is quiet and our isolation absolute, we hold a preliminary survey of the premises—the vorshâl might be within—nor till we had satisfied ourselves that the only noise was of our own making, did we proceed to business.

Unpicking the stones with which, for want of lock and key, the doorway was closed, I sat prepared to enter. 'Where is the door?' asked my friend, inexperienced in Toda architecture. So he remained watching. 'Are you going into that?' I next heard from behind the tails of my coat. He must have received the response as if from a diving-bell.

346 The door of the temple, which by the way, faces almost due south, appears, judging by the eye, to approach in its dimensions, a cubit in height by half a cubit in breadth. Even taken angle-wise this aperture was found to constitute a close fit for full-grown men.

In we crawled, and when fairly inside, re-locked the door by blocking it up behind us: and struck a light. I do not suppose we either of us exactly knew what we had expected to

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. XIX.

find; but a slight groan of disappointment, followed by rapid movements, as of rats in an empty bucket, told the melancholy tale—nothing.

The pitch darkness of the inside, and blackness of the roof and walls, absorbing nearly all the light of our candles, it was with difficulty we satisfied ourselves of the value and form of our possession.

The temple is divided by a thick wooden partition wall—which extends from the earthen floor in which it is buried, to the full height of the roof—into two compartments of equal size. There is a small doorway in this wall of the same dimensions as the first. Midway between the two doorways, at the level of the floor, is a vat or basin of about a half cubit square, made of stone.

We look through the interstices between the clumsy slabs of the dividing-wall, into the next room. That at any rate is not empty. It is the *sanctum sanctorum*, where the relics are kept.

Once more! In through the little door of the dividing wall. Quite easy now! First squat square opposite to it, like a frog. Next supple the whole body. Then go in cornerwise with *élan*! Don't attempt to rise till you are five feet off on the other side. This feat can be practised through a window-frame at ground level.

Just looking round at the little door, more in sorrow than in anger, we proceed to business. Earthenware pots, honnus, and a whirl with which to churn butter by revolving between the palms of the hands. No bell, no hatchet, neither ring nor relic of any kind, no niche for lights, no altar, no stone, no phallus or lingum. No snakes! Everyone has been telling us lies, and the world is full of sawdust!

Back through the two doors quickly, like prairie dogs. Out into the open air. The transition was as if we had been born again.

Now to philosophise. This is a very simple religious faith! How many negatives go to prove a positive! One thing is

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

346
778

clear, every priest must be long in the back and very fond of milk! But why were the doors so unusually small, and why locked, and why these fusty lies about relics?

Some time subsequent to the events just described, an excellent opportunity occurred of making further enquiry regarding relics—the belief in which had now become much shaken—and particularly as regards those which this building had been said to contain, and whose non-discovery haunted me still.

'The people of the village say there are relics—mani—in that temple—dêrmane,[2] or gudi'[3]—I remarked as casually as I could to our old friend, the *ex*-pâlâl, 'do they bury them in the ground?'

Âha,' with a Toda grunt and shake of the head.

'Then where are they?'

Now this Toda had told us many things, and all he had said had proved to be true. Moreover neither he nor any one else had the slightest conception that a visit had been paid to the inside of the dêrmane, or that we entertained any particular interest in it. He must merely have thought to himself from the question, this is another of Paul Pry's 'I only wanted to know.'

He glanced up sideways at me, and

> By his countenance
> Enjoin'd me silence.

With his hand to the side of his mouth, he said in a low voice 'Under the stone on the top of the roof.'

Sold!!

I look on this dêrmane as an exceptional curiosity, possessing for our purposes an interest peculiarly its own. In the first place, it is unique in contour, though *constructed as to plan*

[2] Dêrmane = *Gods-house—residence of the Gods.*

[3] Gudi—*a temple*; a word probably borrowed from the Badagas. In Sanskrit, kudi is a *house* and a *curve*. In Telugu, it is used for a *circle* and a *temple*. In Kanarese it is a *temple*, and is written gudi. [POPE.]

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. XIX.

under the same general ideas, and apparently for similar purposes as the dairy of a tiriêri or the pâlthchi of any Mand. Then it holds a vat—which no other building does—whose use is not understood by the vorshâl in charge, and whose very existence is, I feel nearly certain, unknown to the people. If the vat was constructed for sacrificial purposes, then its use has been discontinued and forgotten, though the priest in charge is a vorshâl or sacrifice man.[4]

It is situated on an exposed site bearing the outlines of stone walls, built on a largeness of scale, and in a form, nowhere else found amongst these people—with a Kromlech and numerous Kairns dotted close about.

The specific name by which it is known—boath[5]—is peculiar, and applicable solely to that style of structure.

Now it should be borne in mind, if we would form an opinion on the origin of this edifice, that the Todas are unimaginative creatures of one idea; having one way of doing everything: intolerant of change or deviation from custom, unless for some manifestly practical advantage. How then do we find such a race in occupation of an eccentric building which does not fit in with any of its other institutions? Not a tiriêri—for it is of lower grade in Toda estimation; its servant a vorshâl, not a God. Not an ordinary pâlthchi, for one of the largest size exists apart, within a few paces of it.

As there is nobody who can give an explanation of the phenomenon, I will submit a theory of my own for consideration. May the boath not be the bethel of some tribe contemporaneous with, and cognate to, the Todas, which, taking refuge like them on these hills, died out in their presence—

[4] See Note 4 of Chapter VIII.

[5] Boath. An enclosed Jain temple is basti.

It may be deemed fanciful to refer to booth or bothy. The Welsh is bwth, the Gaelic is both. This word is of very extensive use. The Tamil vîḍ and Kanarese bîḍ = *house*, may be compared.

The Todas and DrÂvidians generally, have much in common with the Celtic tribes. [POPE.]

3: Breeks G-5 (no date) 1873 Toda

793 They do not wear the ordinary *Pútkuli*, but a scanty black cloth called *Tunni*, made
234 specially for them by the Badagas of Jakanêri.

"The preparations for this supposedly sacred office occupy a whole month, and the "exposure to which the aspirant to it is subjected is so great as to place his life in "some peril. For eight days and eight nights he must remain in the jungles without "a particle of clothing to protect him from the severity of the climate. His body is "at this time to be rubbed over with the juice of a certain tree called Fûr or Tûr, the "botanical name of which I do not know. After this the purifying juice is washed "off, and he is allowed to enter a small hut, which is the only shelter he is permitted "to have during the remainder of the period."*

II. *Varzhâls*, who undergo the same preparation as the *Pâlâls*, but for a shorter period. They are employed as village milkmen, and may be either Peîkis or Pekkans. They hold office temporarily, and during their tenure must abstain from intercourse with women. Whilst employed in their official capacity they may only wear the langooty.

III. *Kokvali*. There is only one, who appears to be identical with the Varzhâl in all but the name; he lives at Târnât mând (*Plate* VIII.).

IV. *Kurpuli*. There is only one, who lives at the Kenna mand of Kândal, and must be a Kenna. In other respects he is the same as the *Varzhâl*.

V. *Pâlikârpâls* may be of any clan, but Peîki and Pekkan mands must have Peîki and Pekkan Pâlikârpâls. They are not obliged to abstain from intercourse with women, and can wear the *Putkuli* while performing their duties as village milkmen.

234 There are two kinds of temples:

778 I. *Boa*, a conical roofed temple surrounded with a low wall (*Plate* XIII.).

346 II. *Pâlthehi*, a temple resembling in outward appearance an ordinary house, but
793 larger. Of *Pâlthehis* there are two varieties; the first the dairy-house, of which every
628 *mand* possesses one at least; the second variety, though similar in appearance, is something more than a dairy-house, and wherever found, the mand is called by Todas *Etadmand* (*Great Mand*), and by Badagas *Mui mand*, in contradistinction to a *Buri* or common mand.

Both *Boas* and *Pâlthehis* are used as dairies, the only difference apparently being that the priests may live in the latter, and not in the former.

When a mand has two temples there are generally two priests, one a Varzhâl, and the other a *Pâlikârpâl*. Each has his own division of the village herd to milk, and his own temple in which to keep the milk and ghee. The *Boa*, if there is one, is appropriated to the *Varzhâl*.

234 There are four *Boas*:—

778 (1.) Called *Mânboa*; at Muttanâd *mand*, about four miles from Ootacamund on the
346 left of the Segûr road.

---

* *Tribes inhabiting the Neilgherry Hills*, by Mr. Metz, p. 19.

3: Breeks G-5 (no date) 1873 Toda

234 (2.) Called *Kiurzh*;* at the *Tiriari* mand near Sholûr.

778 (3.) Called *Türzhva*; at the *Tiriari* mand on the Kûndahs.

346 (4.) Near Brikapatti; called *Mutterzhva*.

Formerly there was a fifth called *Kaledva* near Mukkurti at Mudimand. It is now in ruins.

103 Every clan has its own *Muimands*. I give a list, with the name of the presiding God and Bell, where there is one.

621 776 778

Peiki Muimands (*Etadmands*).

Name of Mand.	Name of Temple and presiding God.	Name of Bell.
1. Karia	Marialph.	
2. Yemagal	Poltivasâri.	
3. Ebgôdu	Nalkanash.	
4. Kengôdu	Kyadf	Mirzhan. Ertâtu. Kirzhan.
5. Kundigôd	Tervalth.	
6. Melgod	Nirzâlva.	
7. Pilondugôd	Tervalth.	
8. Mardini	Nirzâlva.	
9. Denâdu	Apurshanash.	
10. Wongôd	Nirzâlva.	
11. Karimolu	Toriâldf.	

Pekkan Muimands.

1. Manjakal	Môddva.	
2. Narigo	Tvarieldf.	

Kenna Muimands.

1. Kandal	1. Torzhaldf	Narâi Kantshu.
	2. Karzhaldf	Ponâi Kantshu.
2. Kandiko	Tervalth.	
3. Ar	Tilthbóa	Karidzand (2 bells here so called).

---

* Measurements :—

From top of roof to ground	16′	
Inside diameter, north to south	9′	2″
Do. do. east to west	8′	2″
Outer circumference two feet above ground	34′	
Height of doorway, inner and outer	1′	7″
Breadth do. do.	1′	2″
From eaves to ground	8′	5″

The door faces West. The interior is in two compartments, divided by seven thick beams standing on end. The centre beam, in which the inner doorway is cut, is about 1½ feet broad, and reaches from the ground to the conical top. The other six beams are of like thickness, but of less breadth and length.

3: Breeks G-5 (no date) 1873 Toda

tied round the first buffalo's neck, and the corpse was lifted and made to touch three times the side of the animal, which was killed by one blow from the back of an axe, and its body dragged up, so that its head lay close to that of the dead man, the hand of the latter being made to clasp the buffalo's horn (*Plate* XIV.) The bell was then transferred to the other buffalo, and the same process repeated. All the relatives seated themselves by the three bodies to mourn in couples, a man and woman putting their heads together and sobbing and moaning. After a little while each couple would separate, the woman saluting the man by raising his foot to her forehead (except in the case of the old women, when the process was reversed), and fresh pairs would be formed. As with other Eastern people, their sorrow is woeful to behold, the tears literally streaming down their faces and over their cloths. Their grief, however, is marvellously transient.

After this the widow sat alone mourning at the head of the deceased, and put three handfuls of grain into the pocket of his cloth. Then the body was placed on the bier, and laid on the ground beside the pile, which was lighted by the relatives, who, again covering their heads, made fire with two sticks.*

One side of the bier was cut into three and laid on the pile. *Sāmē* grain (*Panicum miliare*) and jaggery, the two great Toda luxuries, were then put into the pocket of the dead man's *pūthuli*, with two cheroots, some tobacco wrapped in red cloth, and the purse, embroidered by one of the mourners, containing five or six rupees in silver and a little gold coin.† A ring was put on the finger, and earrings in the ears. A bit of the skull with hair and one of the finger nails‡ were cut off by the relatives; these, I was told, would be kept till the dry funeral in a little hut built near the mand for that purpose, and a buffalo bell hung over them for the relatives to ring night and morning. The bell is not hung over the remains of a woman. After this, ghee was thrown on the pile; the body was swung three times over the flame and laid on the pile *face downwards*, a sort of imitation bier or hurdle, which had previously been placed under the body, being laid above it.

When the fire has burnt out, any coin or metal that may have been actually given to the flames, is recovered; usually they merely pass such articles through the flame by way of an offering.

No care is taken of the ashes, they "are left to the winds," as a Toda told me.

The dry funeral takes place within a twelvemonth or so after death, according to the pleasure of the relatives. Each clan has its own *kēdmanes*§ or funeral houses, different ones for men and women. They are sometimes near a mund, sometimes not, but always have a kraal at hand. They are like the ordinary Toda huts, but are sometimes decorated at the time of the funeral with silver coins. These are mostly rupees,

---

* A dry stick of the *Calicodaphne Wightiana*, about as thick as a man's thumb, is laid on the ground and held firm by the feet, a second stick is held upright between the two hands, the point resting on the horizontal stick: by twirling the upright with great rapidity between the palms of the hands fire is produced at the point of contact.

† Called by Todas *Birāa pānām*. I think it is the same as the *Birimkana* given to a dying Badaga. This is a *Vīr-roya* or Coorg-fanam.

‡ These appear to be specially sacred relics among the Buddhists also. Stupas covering a lock of hair, crown of skull, or finger-nail of Buddhist saints seem to have been common in the palmy days of Buddhism.

§ *Kēd* is the name given to the skull, hair, and finger-nail saved from the green funeral, which are tied between two pieces of bark.

4: King G-5 (no date) 1870 AWGO Toda AWGO

616 others, I cannot recal, undergo a shorter and less severe period
793 of initiation. Both are often dairymen, an office of great honour and importance; but a *Khoota* is equally eligible, provided he goes through certain preparatory rites in order to purify himself for it. The especial duties of the priests are to tend the sacred herds just mentioned; to conduct the periodical sacrifice of a calf to invoke fruitfulness among their herds; to present the daily offering of milk at their temples; and to superintend the funeral rites. Of actual or of assembled worship, they have none, so far as I could discover, though, individually, they offer up occasional prayers to an Invisible Being for recovery or preservation from sickness.

346 Their temples differ but little in appearance from the ordinary huts. One of them, standing in a pretty little glen, near the road between Jakatalla and Coonoor, I made an examination of at a time when the *mund*, about half a mile off, to which it belonged was deserted by its inhabitants. Creeping in on all fours, I discovered, as well as the darkness permitted, that it contained nothing whatever but a square metal bell and a shapeless black stone, about twice the size of a man's head, the latter placed alone on the floor at the end furthest from the entrance. Being unwilling to bring this out to the light, I could not ascertain whether its colour was natural or artificial. The size precluded the notion of its being an aerolite, although it is well known that meteoric stones have been, in the early history of
782 many countries, regarded with religious awe. To this temple, I had often previously seen the priest from the neighbouring *mund* bring, in the early morning, a vessel of new milk; but whether the offering was poured out, as some say it is, as a libation, or merely presented and taken away again, I had no means of ascertaining without the risk of giving annoyance.

000 It will be borne in mind that black stones have, from the earliest times, been objects of reverence or actual adoration from east to west; as, for instance, in Mecca, also among the ancient Romans, and even in the western islands of Scotland, where, moreover, milk was offered to them. Bells, too, have been, in past ages, regarded with veneration, and as having mysterious powers over demons and evil spirits, not only by various Eastern races and castes, but in ancient Britain.

The Todas believe in the existence of an invisible and

4: King G-5 (no date) 1870 AW60 Toda AW60

refer, had we not been accompanied, or rather introduced, by the Moravian missionary, Mr. Metz, whom I have already mentioned as being so much esteemed by the tribe.

Our ride to Kapilla, the scene of these interesting rites, lay for some miles over a fine open undulating table-land dotted with enormous rhododendrons, which were loaded with clusters of dark crimson flowers. Gradually we got into higher ground, now pressing our hill-ponies up steep acclivities, now skirting the edge of great forest belts stretching downwards for many a mile into the sultry valleys at our feet, till, guided by the appearance of a few distant natives wending their way towards an isolated wood on one of the surrounding mist-covered peaks, we at length came within hearing of the shrill and very peculiar sound of Khota hautboys.

Leaving our ponies, we entered a deep shadowy wood of moss-grown trees, whose gnarled and twisted stems and branches were also completely covered overhead and down to the ground with ferns, orchids, long pendent tufts of grey lichen, and parasitical plants, one with dark glossy leaves and an orange flower being especially beautiful.

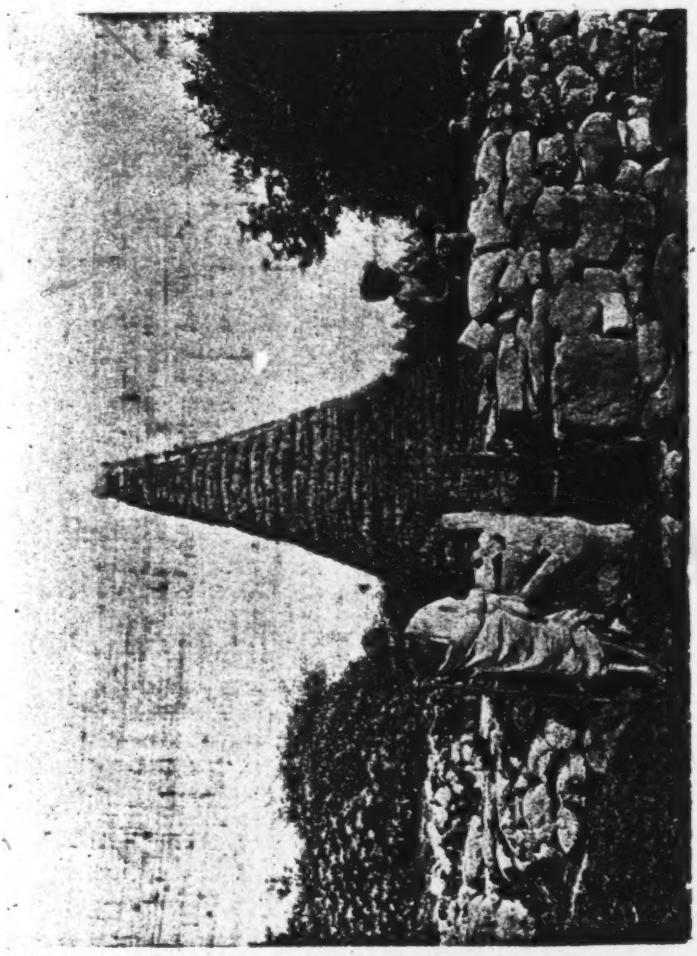
In an open space, near the centre of this shady grove, and lit up by the bright rays of the midday sun, was a surging crowd of white-robed Todas, and half-naked Khotas with wild and excited looks, whose unmusical pipes drowned all other sounds. Outside the wood, on an open green space, stood a Toda temple, having its gable-ends of polished wood thickly studded over with silver coins of various sizes, fixed in perpendicular rows on each alternate plank. Near at hand was a small temporary shed, or ridge-shaped tent, made of pieces of native cloth, whilst at a little distance off was a large circular *tooel*, or cattle kraal, with a wall both higher and thicker and altogether much more substantial than usual. It was constructed of stones and sun-baked clay, the entrance being barred with stout poles.

Within this enclosure stood ten splendid buffaloes, their clean bright skins and polished horns indicating that some pains had been taken to improve their naturally fine appearance.

Crowds of women and children stood or sat about the temple, in which a party of the former had just placed the deceased's robe and ornaments, together with two bags containing his ashes. With the exception of the younger children, who were naked

7: Thurston E-5 (no date) 1909
AW60 Toda AW60

346
302
291
516
481



"TODA CATHEDRAL"

[facing p. 131]

7:Thurston E-5 (no date)1909
AW60 Toda AW60

346 234 In addition to the dairies which in form resemble the dwelling-huts, the Todas keep up as dairy-temples certain curious conical edifices, of which there are said to be four on the Nīlgiri plateau, viz., at the Muttanād mand, near Kotagiri, near Sholūr, and at Mudimand. The last was out of repair a few years ago, but was, I was informed, going to be rebuilt shortly. It is suggested by Dr. Rivers as probable that in many cases a dairy, originally [118] of the conical form, has been rebuilt in the same form as the dwelling-hut, owing to the difficulty and extra labour of reconstruction in the older shape. The edifice at the Muttanād mand (or Nōdrs), at the top of the Sīgūr ghāt, is known to members of the Ootacamund Hunt as the Toda cathedral. It has a circular stone base and a tall conical thatched roof crowned with a large flat stone, and is [184] surrounded by a circular stone wall. To penetrate within the sacred edifice was forbidden, but we were informed that it contained milking vessels, dairy apparatus, and a swāmi in the guise of a copper bell (mani). The dairyman is known as the varzhal or wursol. In 178 front of the cattle-pen of the neighbouring mand, I noticed a grass-covered mound, which, I was told, is sacred. The mound contains nothing buried within it, but [164] the bodies of the dead are placed near it, and earth from the mound is placed on the corpse before it is removed to the burning-ground. At "dry funerals" the buffalo is said to be slain near the mound. It has been suggested 346 by Colonel Marshall * that the "boa or boath [poh.] is not 174 a true Toda building, but may be the bethel of some tribe contemporaneous with, and cognate to the Todas, which, taking refuge, like them, on these hills, died out in their presence."

[113]

* A Phrenologist among the Todas, 1873.

9:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1938) 1939 AW60 Toda AW60

have had as its immediate incentive an incident in which a Toda man who was ill was given medicine by a Tamilian Christian and told to pray at the Tamil Church in Ootacamund. He seems to have interpreted this as a vow to a god, such vows being freely undertaken by the Todas,[2] and on recovery he went to the church to do whatever rites were customary. The missionaries regarded this as a direct call to undertake mission work with the tribe and Miss Ling was appointed to be in charge. In 1904 the first convert was baptized, [kišker] (59, Kishkar),[3] his own name being used as a baptismal name along with Paramajyoti, a Sanskritic name of the Tamil and Tamil Christian type. This man was appointed a catechist to preach to the Todas and still acts as such. In 1907 the next converts, five young women, were baptized. Preaching and teaching were carried on from the beginning in the face of recurrent opposition from the tribe, although much of the teaching was only indirectly religious. When converts were made, economic difficulties arose since these persons were cut off from the tribal life, both by the tribe and also, though reluctantly, by the missionaries, whose aspiration had been to convert the tribe as a whole and retain the old economic structure while doing away with the religious and the more un-Christian social features of the tribal culture (such, *e.g.*, as polyandry, the low status of women, etc.) and adding agriculture to the pastoral regime. The difficulty was met by getting permission to use some of the abandoned Toda village and dairy sites and pasturages; on two of these the converts were settled and agriculture was joined to the care of cattle in providing a living for them. At both places a church was built, the more important having a turret and bell provided by the converts themselves, which Miss Ling, probably correctly, regards as an equivalent in the life of the Toda Christians to the sacred bells of the tribal dairies. Houses for the people, schools, and medical dispensaries complete the material side of the mission colonies. The number of converts has varied. Many Todas at various periods have undergone religious instruction preliminary to baptism without being able to take the final step. At present the number of persons living at the two colonies is

[2] See my paper *Toda Culture Thirty-five Years after* (Annals Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute 19. 101–121), 117.

[3] When a Toda is mentioned, he is placed with reference to the genealogical tables in W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas* (London, Macmillan and Co., 1906), by the number of the table in which his name occurs and the spelling there given. The writing of Toda words in this paper is strictly phonemic. The phonetic characters used are in general those of the IPA. Small capitals represent retroflex consonants, except that [ɢ] is used for the sibilant. Italics represent alveolars, [r] being an alveolar trill. [ɾ] is a post-dental one-flap tremulant. [š] represents the abnormal sibilant (almost like English sh). [c] and [ʒ] are affricates of *ts* and *dz* type respectively. [ə] is a mid, mixed, rounded vowel, [ɯ] high, back, unrounded. When two vowel characters are juxtaposed, they together represent a diphthongal phoneme; [aɯi] in one name is the diphthong [aɯ] plus the vowel [i].

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

economy is not a poor one, and the standard of living of the tribe is quite definitely higher than that of the average plainsman.

The dairyman with the Todas is the priest, and his processing of the milk produced by the sacred animals into butter and buttermilk is looked upon as a religious act. Ths takes place in specially constructed buildings which are dairies and temples at the same time. They are known by the generic term of *polkhthli*, and their degree of sanctity varies proportionally to the type of buffalo which they serve. Thus the highest dairy-temples are called *ti* (where *tiir* are cared for), the lowest *tarvali* (which is the *mad*'s, serving ordinary buffaloes or *putir*), and there are such intermediate ones as *wursuli* (for the *wursulir*), *kurpali* (for the *nodrovair*) and *kugvali* (for the *kugvalir*).

To each of these herds of buffaloes and to their corresponding dairy-temple, there is a priest-dairyman, who alone is allowed to milk the animals and process their milk in accordance with an ancient ritual, which consists mainly in the recital of stereotyped formulae, called *kwarshm*. The *ti* and *tiir* are served by a *palol*, who is highest ranking priest of the tribe, assisted by a *kaltmokh*; the *tarvali* or village dairy-temple is in charge of a *tarvalikartmokh*, while the *wursuli*, *kurpali* and *kugvali* have respectively a *wursol*, a *kurpalikartmokh* and a *kugvalikartmokh*. These priests are subjected to very strict rules of behaviour and ritual purity, and are recognizable at once by the black cloak of office which they wear, the *tuni*. The *palol* at the *ti* alone has to milk the very holy *tiir*, completely naked, except for a diminutive perineal band, the *kuvn* – no mean feat during the winter, in the cold and rarefied atmosphere at nearly 8,000 feet.

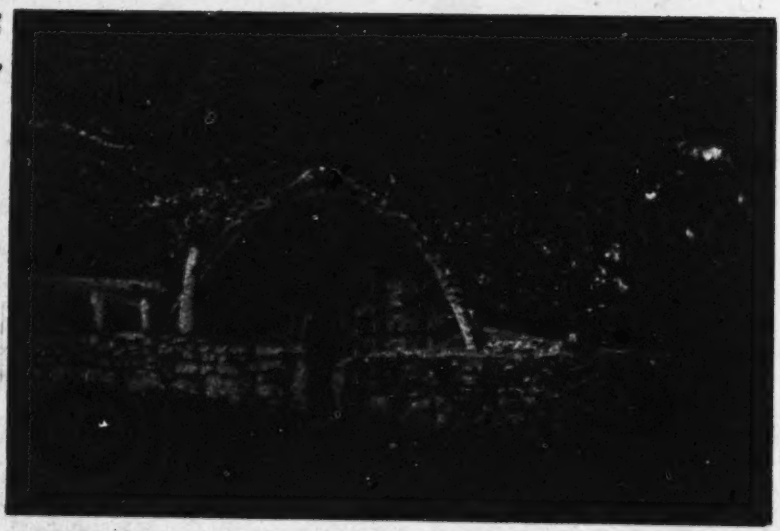
The Toda tribe, very homogeneous, consisting only of men and women of that name, is divided into two patrilineal, respectively endogamous moieties, that of the Tardharsh and that of the Teivilkh. I am purposely spelling these names at variance with the orthography of W. H. R. Rivers, because it appears to me closer this way to the manner in which the Todas pronounce them. Other words in this chapter which do not conform to the fashion in which the author of *The Todas* writes them are purposely spelt differently so as to be in keeping with what seemed to me a more faithful phonetic rendering of Toda speech.

The tribe considers the Tardharsh moiety as superior to the Teivilkh, and gives higher social status to the members of the former; in what follows, there will be numerous examples of this discrimination, which is continually encountered by anyone having anything to do with the

342
361

Fig. 22. A typical Toda mad in the Nilgiris: Karsh, near Ootacamund.

343
346



[193] Fig. 23. The *tarvali* of Melgarsh: Motsod, the *tarvalikartmokh* in his black *tuni* at the door.

[P 300-A]